Better monthly regional labour market data now available

Media Release

Released 2/05/2024

Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, March 2024

New labour market data offering a better picture of regional employment and unemployment is now available every month from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

These new modelled regional labour force estimates build on the existing Labour Force Survey data, by drawing in extra data sources to provide more insight into regional labour markets.

Bjorn Jarvis, ABS head of labour statistics, said: “Regional labour market information is some of the most sought-after information the ABS produces, so it’s exciting to release significantly improved data. This new data will provide regions across Australia with a much better indication of the state of their labour market and how it’s changing over time.

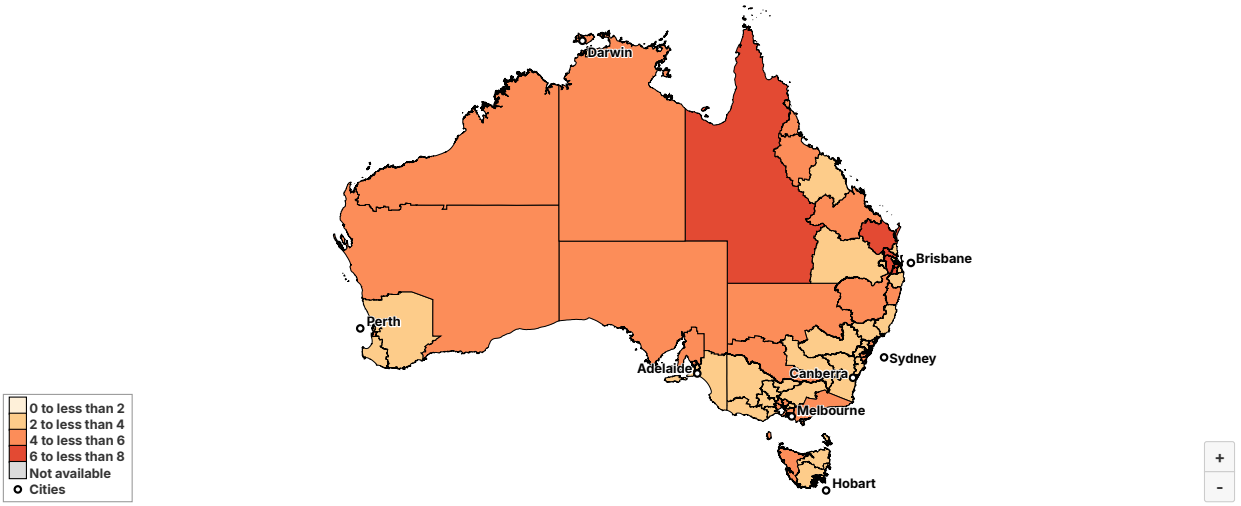
“It’s an innovative approach that the ABS is using more often in our statistics. We're increasingly using administrative data - that is, data already collected through systems like Single Touch Payroll reporting and social assistance payments - together with information from surveys to make our data even more useful.

“In the past, our regional labour market statistics relied exclusively on people responding to the Labour Force Survey. While it has a very large sample, the survey isn’t designed for reporting for regional labour markets. This meant the data for these areas was inherently more variable than the data for Australia and the states and territories.

“Producing more useful data helps us to meet the growing demand for more targeted regional and community information,” Mr Jarvis said.

Feedback

Regional Unemployment Rates, March 2024 (Original)



Mid-North Coast region includes Lord Howe Island.
Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Norfolk Island are excluded from the map. Data for these is included in Other Territories.

Data are displayed at Statistical Area 4 level.
Data for the ACT are the direct survey estimates.
Western Australia - Outback (North) and Western Australia - Outback (South) are modelled as a combine SA4.

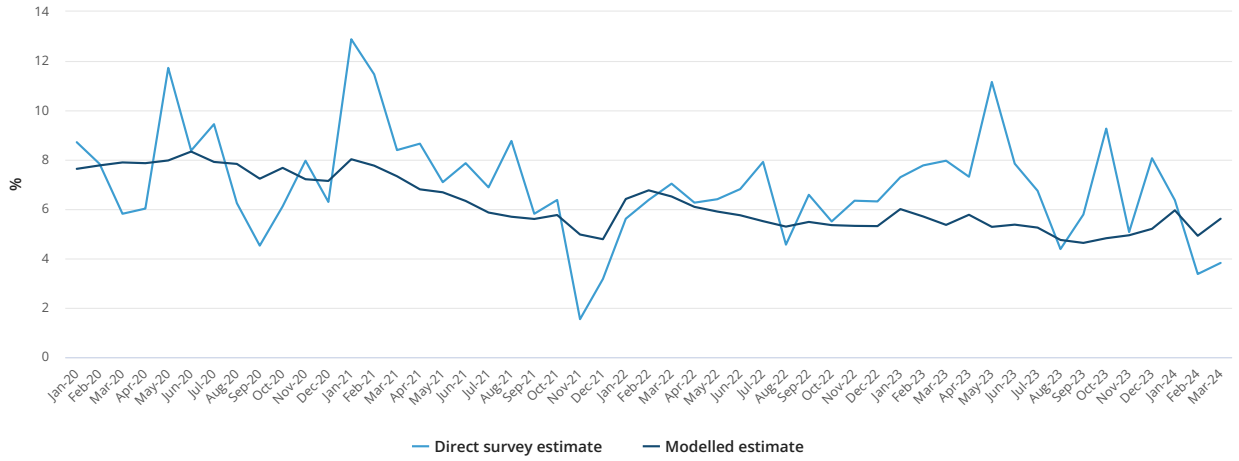
Feedback

The new data is better across all regions, with the greatest improvements outside of the capital cities.

“Less populated areas, such as the central parts of Australia and areas outside of the capital cities, are where we see the greatest quality improvements from this new data.

"The improvements to the data for inner-city regions aren’t as large, because those areas tend to have larger populations, but the data for these regions is still noticeably better,” Mr Jarvis said.

Unemployment rate, South Australia - Outback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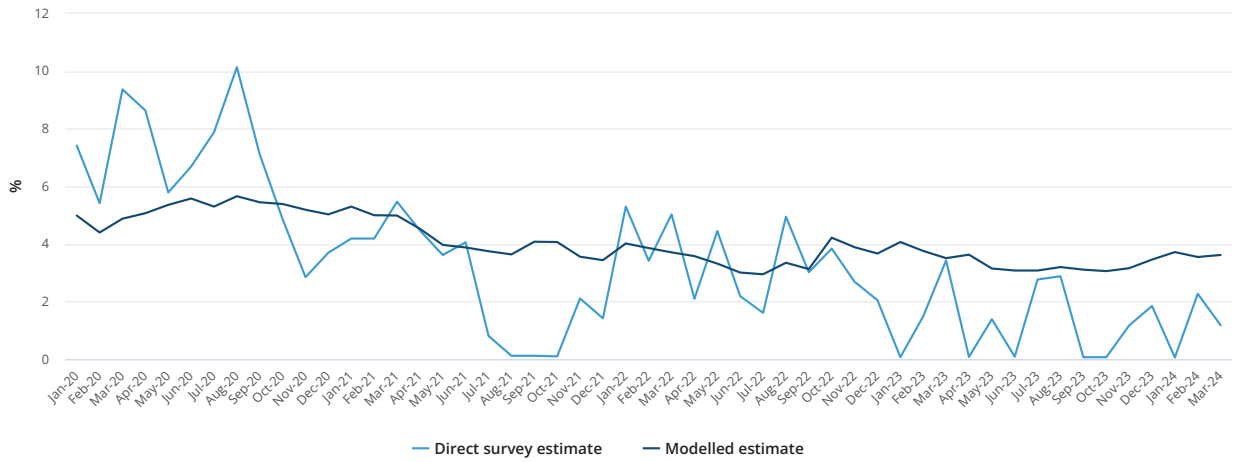
Direct survey estimate
Modelled estimate

Unemployment rate, Shepparton

Feedback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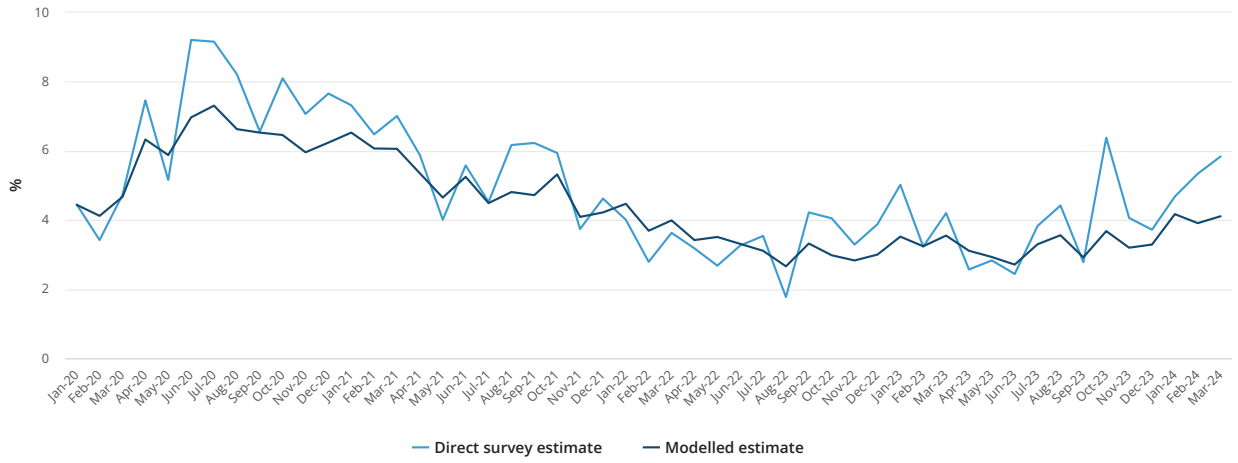
Direct survey estimate
Modelled estimate

Unemployment rate, Sydney - City and Inner South



The new modelled estimates are available in this month's Labour Force, Australia, Detailed (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release#labour-market-regions-sa4-) releas in a new data download 'MRM1 - Modelled estimates of labour force status, by SA4 (ASGS)'.

The ABS will continue to add these modelled SA4 estimates to the detailed Labour Force release a week after it is first released (i.e. two weeks after the main Labour Force release). Later in the year, they will be available as part of the detailed release (i.e. one week after the main Labour Force release).

The ABS is also developing improved regional labour force estimates at lower-level areas, as well as age and sex breakdowns. An update on this is expected to be available in mid-2024.

Further information

To coincide with this release, the ABS has released a Regional labour market data guide (/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/regional-labour-market-data-guide) .

Information on the ABS journey producing these new estimates can be found in Improving SA4 level estimates from the Labour Force Survey using administrative data models (/statistics/detailed-methodology-information/information-papers/improving-sa4-level-estimates-labour-force-survey-using-administrative-data-models) (released in June 2023) and Further refinements to modelled SA4 level Labour Force estimates using administrative data (/statistics/detailed-methodology-information/information-papers/further-refinements-modelled-sa4-level-labour-force-estimates-using-administrative-data) (released in October 2023).

Further information on the time series method can be found in A Rao-Yu model for small area estimation of labour force statistics (/statistics/research/rao-yu-model-small-area-estimation-labour-force-statistics) .

Media notes

Feedback

- Access official, high-resolution images of Bjorn Jarvis and other ABS media spokespeople from our image library (https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/abs-image-library) .
- When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.
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Feedback